

Judiciary Committee

March 7, 2016

**Senate Bill 326: An Act Concerning the Indemnification of Law Enforcement Professionals
Senate Bill 363: An Act Concerning Revisions to Various Statutes Concerning the Criminal
Justice System**

Senator Coleman, Representative Tong, and members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is John Bannan. I am a police inspector in the Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ). I also serve as President of the Police Inspector's Council of the Connecticut State Employees Association/Service Employees International Union Local 2001. I am submitting this testimony in support of S.B. No. 326 and S.B. No. 363.

This legislative session my union requested a change to address what we believed is an oversight in Connecticut General Statute section 53-39a. While this statute indemnifies virtually every other state and municipal police officer in Connecticut for economic loss, including attorney's fees, for a criminal prosecution resulting from a line of duty incident for which the officer is later exonerated or the charges are dismissed, this statute does not include Inspectors in the Division of Criminal Justice. The change we sought, and continue to seek, is very simple: add Inspectors in the Division of Criminal Justice to the list of those who are indemnified by their employing agency. While S.B. No. 326 is specifically about indemnification, S.B. No. 363 includes the entirety of the language from S.B. No. 326, so both pieces of legislation correct this error in state statute.

It is very rare for a Connecticut police officer to be charged with a crime. No DCJ Inspector, in my memory, has ever been criminally charged for on-duty misconduct. However, our duties have evolved in the past several years. Our Inspectors are now, more than ever, working on the streets of Connecticut in partnership with other law enforcement agencies on shooting task forces, investigating criminal complaints, executing search warrants, and making arrests. It is dangerous work, which is why we are classified as hazardous duty state employees. We are merely asking that we be treated as is any other police officer in Connecticut when it comes to indemnification when we acted appropriately as determined by the criminal justice system.

We ask that Inspectors in the Division of Criminal Justice be added to the list of police officers who are indemnified by their employing agency as stated in 53-39a. All we want is to be afforded the same rights and protections as any other Connecticut police officer is afforded.

I thank you for your time and attention.

John Bannan,
Police Inspector, Division of Criminal Justice